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HARDRADA,

AND OTHER POEMS.



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Frank Mainwaring
Christ Church
November 23^d 1878

HARDRADA
AND
OTHER POEMS

H A R D R A D A

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

PAUL WILLIAMS WYATT

Christ Church, Oxford

BEDFORD—F. HOCKLIFFE
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1878

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TO
MY BROTHERS
VITRUVIUS AND HERVEY

91725

These are but passing tones
Half-caught amid the thousand sounds of life
That sweep across our too world-burdened ears.

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HARDRADA

ند
A MEMORY OF STAMFORD BRIDGE

1066

HARDRADA.

I.

THE FIGHT.

So the morn broke along the dusky hills ;
Woke to new burst of life the sleeping rills
And streams of Derwent ; and the coming day
Flung its first lights across the heather's grey,
Redd'ning the tents of Norway : sullen hung
The Land-waster's proud ensign—pennon sung
By skald, or king, or spearman—dreaded name,
That yet no foe could lower to defame.
So swayed its folds slow through the morning air,
Drooping like palm above a lion-lair,
Guarding Hardrada's rest as he lay sleeping there.

Far stretched the Norsemen's camp: slow past them roll'd
The flood of reedy Derwent to the wold:
Secure they lay, still flushed with victory's charm,
Nor dreamed of fight, nor heeded war's alarm.
What fear was their's? York's timorous head was bent
In that ill-timed surrender: her intent
To save herself; she recked not who should fall:
"Perish Earl Harold, Eadwine, Morkere, all:
"Perish their cause"—this, this her only cry,
So she might 'scape the o'er-looming destiny.

Thus waits the host far-stretched along the leas
Northumbria's plighted train of hostages;
What thought of coming victory had they?
How slept the chiefs in their own reverie?
Did Fulford's field presage the rising day?
Should Stamford see their crowning victory?
Hardrada dreaming sees a coming throne;
Tostig yearns but to take again his own,

His fair Northumbria ; that loved him erst,
But drave him forth by Gamil's death accurs'd ;
And Norway dreams his Raven-flight shall be
E'en wider-winged—a mightier empery.
'Sudden a cloud—no cloud of heaven—is seen,
A dust-cloud, broken by the flashing sheen
Of coming spear and helm ; as one descries
In Northern seas an iceberg pierce the skies
With fretted pinnacles of dazzling snow
Piercing thro' mists that wrap the heaving floe.
To arms ! to arms ! avenging England comes !
His brother's wrong, his own false service numbs
The terror'd heart of Tostig ; but the might
Of Norway shrinks not from the coming fight,
While cravens counsel one and all retreat,
To gain the shelt'ring cover of the fleet.

Note 1. Snorro, Johnstone, 206. Laing, vol. iii. 87.

But the skald king bids stand. And at that call
On either side springs up a living wall
Of Scandinavia's heroes, as the note
Of her defiance on the English smote.

And as in some deep mockery of Peace,
One rides to sue for terms and compact, "Cease,
"Cease," rose the cry, "'tis idle. Stay—if he,
"My brother still, again my Earl will be,
"Let it be so, and spare the fight." "Say, then,
"What have the King and these his Northern men?"
"Their full seven feet of ground—to all—and he
"One foot the more to match his sovereignty."
—Asked but to prove the mettle of each host;
—Answered and e'en fulfilled, no idle boast.

So clasht the hosts together; and there rang
Spear against buckler, helms with sword-strokes clang,
And chief smote chief with sword and skald-like sang—
The old Berserker rage within their breasts;

And waved a mighty sea of shimmering tossing crests.
So fought the hosts, and Sigurdsson fought on,
Mightiest among the mighty ; and had won
Another fight—where England's arms struck not
For English land—by her own sons forgot—
But for her smote her sons, and Godwine's line
Itself forgot not ; nor the hoary sign
Of the old worshipped dragon ; and its lord
Smote with his steel, as high above him soar'd
The standard ; and the lord of Norway fought
²Unpanzered and unhelmed ; seemed but to court
Death's crowning duel, deal one parting blow,—
And own but him alone the conquering foe.

II.

THE DEATH OF HARDRADA.

UPCLOMB the orb of day ; and yet the fight
Unbroken raged in its first furied might ;
And Iceland, Ireland, Scotland, Orkney fought
For Norway and for Tostig ; and distraught
At her own equipoise did Fortune soar
Hovering uncertain o'er the din of war.
Hear the loud cry of England, "Holy Rood,"
See arrows' deadly flight, the field bestrewed
With sunken warriors of that living wall
Staunch to the death, whom no death might appal,
Around the great horse standard : sudden—he—
The Land-waster falls low and yields to destiny.

So goes he to fell Hela's murky shades
Where light of day into dim twilight fades ;
And flitter the pale ghosts by Giall's shore,
Or where the founts of dark Vergelmer pour
Their loathsome waters to the dread Queen's throne,
And Asgard sees a pomp more awful than its own.

And fiercer raged the fight ; and Tostig took
His stand beneath the banner ; and there shook
Its folds defiant, till the arrow hied
Burying its fell head deep within his side.
And falling pierced he still for vengeance cries,—
A traitor, yet a brave, a traitor dies.
Then came there Eystein Orre from the fleet
Stem-tipp'd with burnished gold, hurrying to meet
England's advancing line ; and strove to stay
The back retreating host. And now the day
Dropped slowly down below the western wave
And drew its lights from o'er the Norsemen's grave.

Yet still the hosts charge on till duskier night
Spreads her dark robe between and stays the fight.

* * * *

So part the nations, fated ne'er to meet
By land, by sea, with armies or with fleet
In war's array again—a lasting peace
Struck once and deep—a bond that shall increase
Unsnapt ; unfretted by the onward course
Of centuries, that rends with its slow force
All-certain. Friends for ever shall they be
Borne on the downward tide of nations' history.

III.

THE NIGHT OF THE VICTORY.

SEE how oftimes in the mid-storm the blast
Will lull its raging fury ; and as past
All seems awhile ; and stricken nature hies
To gain her form that chilled and prostrate lies.
Too soon—deceptive presage of a strife
As yet unfought out, sterner, feller, rife
With hidden struggle ; then bursts forth once more
The storm-cloud voices, and the fire-fiend's roar :
Aloft the victim-seeking bolt upsoars
All deadlier in its aim that it hath sought the pause.
So came to England's king the lull of war
That fell o'er Stamford's victory ; and he saw

And knew it in himself ; heard the far cry
Of coming winds that sighed his destiny.
And dying Edward's prophet voice outspake
The ills to come in this false victory's wake ;
“Sanguelac!” “The arrow!” pierced his prescient ears,
And saints forsworn fanned on the growing fears ;
And the bowed Rood struck chill with dark dismay
The soul that conscious right and wrong alone could sway.

One hero heart in this too craven earth ;
A giant soul unknowing its own worth :
Conscious but of the strife within that stirred
To prove th' intent that broke a plighted word :
A true soul, likest God's own image he—
Born a true king, born but to destiny.

Then with a mighty effort of the man
The heart revived, and swift the warm blood ran ;
And Godwine's house all-chivalrous should again
O'er England's unrent throne triumphant reign.

Now rose the wassail shouts along the feast,
The long line of broad tables ; nor the least
Of these his chieftains' voices is the king's,
As down the halls in laughter loud it rings.
And Eadwine sat him there by his lord's side
Oblivious of defeat, that erst betyde
Northumbria's Earldom there, and Morkere's shield
Left battered and down-trod upon the field.
It may be the king's conscious soul within
Dwelt on that oath, and knew how that his sin
E'en now was a sin pardoned, an oath ta'en
To his own hurt but dared for England's gain :
Knew that his country and his crown were his,
And his of right : why care he more than this ?
And so his voice rang clear, and the laugh sped
All bright as his should be but now that wed
A royal English wife, that Godwine's strain
Might mingle it with Alfgar's, and their reign

From two unstable coronets build one crown
Over all England, ne'er to be cast down ;
Bright as behoved him then as he might see
Round him the warrior friends he led to victory.

But sudden came a pause upon the feast ;
And voices hushed, and laughter's ringing ceased,
As up the hall stained and besmirched with dust,
And panting loud, in hurried course there rushed
A courier from the South, that sped to tell
News that but struck the note of England's knell ;
The seas safe crossed at last, the Norman came
By dint of arms to prove his vaunted claim.
No voice awhile brake on the silent hall—
None dared his fellow's utterance to forestall—
Late, bending forwards, low, an agèd thane
Whispered his neighbour Edward's dread refrain
Of Senlac ; and a shiver ran amain
Adown the feast ; as when the bending grain

Deep-laden in the autumn takes the force
Of passing winds that o'er the rich fields course.
Then spake the king, and rose, and bade them arm,
And all at his loud tones forgot th' alarm ;
So fell the banquet shouts, the wassail strain,
And each girt on his blade to essay the fight again.

IV.

THE BURIAL OF HARDRADA.

STILL rides the cold moon high o'er Derwent's flood,
Rolling encrimsoned with the warrior blood
Out-poured on Stamford's plain, past that great span
Of unhewn stones 'neath which the river ran,
Bearing its tale down to the Northern Sea,
Its count of life, of death, defeat, and victory :
The deadly scatt perforce each people bore,
Not more the conquered than the conqueror.
And paler than the pale moon's silver gleam,
Splint'ring her down-shot arrows on the stream,
Burnt the far torches of a silent crowd
Of mourners, moving o'er the field bestrewed
Alike with foe and friend that lay in sleep,
. Such sleep as knew no waking, calm and deep.

As some long march of cranes wends its slow train
By Guadalquiver or thro' Ebro's plain,
Silent their course and long, save the low cry
That warns the approach of some near enemy ;
Then halts the column to survey the plain,
And e'en pursues its forward march again :
So moved the band of silent monks and sad ;
Thought's utterance all their weight of grief forbad ;
Friend after friend they mark, foe upon foe,
And bursts upon the night some cry of woe
Too long pent-up, as the low graves close o'er
Loved faces, that may now be seen no more.
And there the traitor Earl in death is found
Disfigured and despoiled ; his arms around
Shivered, and stained, and dinted ; no repose
Or painted death as sleep, or seemed to gloze
The dead form as a living ; and they bear
His body to the king his brother ; there

He shall not lie—but e'en forgiv'n in death
Shall sleep where first he drew his childhood breath,
And heard his brother's prattling voice and loved ;
So, false himself, the other's trueness proved.

Then seek they him among the ghastly throng,
Their first of men to Norway, and the song
Of poet-chiefs ; nor seek they vainly long.

For he lay there a giant at repose,
Amid a slaughtered host of fallen foes ;
His visage seared with one great murd'rous scar—
A face e'en then that death forebore to mar
With his own ghostly pallor ; and his eye
Closed as in a light sleep doth death belie.
No line hath searing care stamped on his brow ;
Calm slept he in his tent, and sleeps he now ;
A warrior fell with his slain round him strewed—
The last grim witness to his fortitude.

So bear they him to that his promised grave,
The sepulchre that England's monarch gave ;
When each the other faced in princely might,
And rode in majesty to meet the fight :
E'en now a helpless burden in their arms—
His northern beauty yields not all its charms ;
Life fled still leaves behind its glorious tracks,
Enhancing all that ruined power it lacks.
As Adriatic cities of the sea
Fling o'er the still wave all their brilliancy
In mirror'd outline, and in silence mourn
The surge of waves erst round their walls now gone ;
That wooing them no more leaves but the boon
Of unmoved stillness in the dead lagoon ;
Reflects but splendours of the days gone by,
And guards the truth of their past empery :
So showed the dead man's face his high estate,
A sovereign still, as when the thread of Fate

By grey Nornes spun hung o'er the Raven's flight,
And urged him on in thund'ring Northern might
To English shores : his panoply of power
Seemed still encircling e'en in this death-hour ;
And writ upon his smile they read the count
Of battle-joys, of might, soul-born, that none could daunt.

They laid him down beside that Northern shore :
His shroud the sand, his dirge the ocean roar ;
They gave his death-chant to the winds to sing,
And buried him, and said, ' He was a king.'

SIGHS OF THE SEA.

THE northern wind sweeps down the sea ;
And over the surge
Floats the low dirge
Of the passing bell from the lea.

Wafted, blown above the breezes,
Moaning low through the night,
Chilling the morning light
That itself already freezes ;

Low, low its sound at the day-break
Waking the dell
With its deathly knell,
Proclaiming a widow's heart-ache.

A sire and a son set sail ; alack !

That the winds blew fair

To the morning air

Of the day that should ne'er see them back.

They are gone where many a friend and foe

Lie with their dead

In the oozy bed,

'Neath the heaving ocean's ebb and flow.

“ Will they, will they come ? ” she had said,

That mother and wife,

As she watched the strife

Of winds and billows that sighed out ‘ Dead.’

Dead ! dead ! her own, her own ;

The boy she loved,

The man she had proved,

And she alone.

Dead! dead! "Will they come?" her cry:

Answered—not on earth,

But in other birth

Of new life that is born as we die.

Three graves? nay, nay the same sod;

Parted not let them be;

Lives bound together three

Rest they together—with God.

GWENDOLINE.

HE turned, and left the place, and bowed his head,
His heart bursting with its own sorrow-spleen,
Left you as one to him henceforward dead,
You, Gwendoline.

He stood by those dark laurels that of old
Your plighted love had seen ;
Your lips to him th' oft fabled words out-told,
Yours, Gwendoline.

And as his touch played with your golden hair,
And kisses too, I ween,
Rained hot upon your burning forehead there,
There, Gwendoline,

You took his love, and threw your piercing look,
Your eyes flashed all their sheen ;
And he, soul-stirred with thrilling passion, shook
For Gwendoline.

And in his arms you scarce gave him one thought,
Whose love you ne'er had been :
You knew that hundred other suitors sought
Fair Gwendoline.

And yet you held him in your captive hold,
Your fair false arms between ;
He knew not that to others you were sold,
Their Gwendoline.

And then it came. One he had slighted erst
Told him all, of mere spleen ;
In his first frenzied grief he madly cursed
You, Gwendoline.

And then the old love came on him anew ;

And with a heart serene

Again he rose, and would have trusted you,

His Gwendoline.

And once again he came to meet you here,

These old tall trees between ;

His passions tost amain with hope and fear,

Of Gwendoline.

And you, traitress before, at last betrayed

Yourself as you had been,

And shameless stood before him there displayed

As Gwendoline.

The scarlet pomegranate had blushed to meet

That silent love I ween ;

He bowed, he fell, stricken before your feet,

Yours, Gwendoline.

And in one groan his agony went forth :

Death's icy blast had been

Spring's sun, as he rushed to the driving north

From Gwendoline.

* * * *

* * * *

He left, and could not curse you for the love

He bore you as his queen ;

He dare not to believe that you could prove

False, Gwendoline.

His soul fled back to the circle of your charms

As they of old had been,

He felt the warm embrace of your soft arms,

Yours, Gwendoline.

And then the traitor-kiss stole o'er his thought,
And strove itself to screen
From sight the soul-murder by your hands wrought,
Fell Gwendoline.

* * * *

* * * *

And so he left you and came not again,
But in his anguish keen
Bowed his head slowly there, and there lay slain
By Gwendoline.

March, 1877.

STORNOWAY.

TO K. J. M.

ONE wrote and told of Stornoway

With sea and cliff, and wind-swept shore,

And castled turrets grim and grey

Fronting the sullen ocean-roar :

All varied scenes as these, and more,

Such told he then in his own way ;

And as I read, before me lay

The scenes he saw and sang, but aye

There rose a thought in me beyond all he might say.

And e'en as he that other told

Of seas all-furied in their might :

How frowning cliffs with frontlet bold

Hurl back their waves in sovereign right ;

And skies glare with their sapphire light
Or mellow softly into gold ;
Yet fairer scenes than these he told
And thoughts that e'er we know as old
And yet are new—yea, new as though they ne'er had been.

As told that other, so I saw

The sky, the rock, the battling wave,
And castled hill, and sunny shore,
Or watched the stars their glimmering lave ;
Such scenes all other thoughts out-drove
Save one—that filled my heart of yore,
And great within it grew yet more—
For one whose love for me was law
And law but love law-giving—giving for my weal.

Stornoway Castle, N.B.,

July, 1875.

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

IN more than queen-like grace she stands ;
Pleads for her son with out-stretched hands—
Imperious child of other lands.

France answers, Vengeance ! hear the cry ;
She proudly turns, nor knows a sigh ;
So calmly bends her head to die.

Fate thrusts her to a giddy throne,
High, yet scarce higher than her own,
Then, rolling onward, hurls her down.

A SEA EVENING.

A PALE, o'er sicklied, downward dropping sun
Behind a plain of seas ; a leaden wooing
Of grey and purple tints—a shingle reach
Low-lying, and with scarce a rising ridge
Breaking the distance : pools left by the tide
Stretching here, there, and taking the faint ray
Of dulling lights scarce flashed out in the west :
And then two forms at play,—chance boys or girls,
Or one and one—stooping above the pools,
And the bright ring of laughter, as their hand
Caught some green sea-crab welcoming not the touch ;

Or dashed a hasty palm into the pool
Splashing the other : tournaments of mirth
And childhood's sunlight, gleaming through the waste
Of dull unburnished seas and smouldering skies
Of faded flames lit by the setting day.

ARE all things then too late ?
Shall all this toil as one long day-dream break
Into the real, to find ideals null,
And that truth-germ within them just died out
For want of using ? Are all things too late ?

BASIAS.

TO C. H. B., IN REMEMBRANCE OF A SUMMER IN
HUNGARY AND SERVIA DURING THE TURKO-SERVIAN
CAMPAIGN OF 1876.

'Tis gained : at last before me lie
The lands I've longed to see ;
Eager I turn my willing eye
O'er mountain and o'er lea ;
Range upon range, plain after plain,
Again, unwearied, and again
All wondering I may scan ;
Where Ister's bosom broadly spread,
Is narrowing to a silver thread,
From Basiàs to Kasán.

Ister, whose ever-rolling streams
Are born in northern snow ;
Who now 'twixt crag and forest gleams,
Now winds 'mid marshes low ;
Fed by a thousand streams that haste
To lose their waters in his waste,
He rolls superbly on ;
'Neath mellowed moons, star-studded skies,
His swelling current eastward hies,
Until the goal is won.

* * * * *

And can it be that o'er yon hills
The Cross with Crescent vies ;
And Christian blood dyes deep the rills,
And cold the Pagan lies ?
Fanatic rule has fired a train
That fanned by greed and lust of gain

Has burst o'er Europe's peace ;
Hope one, hope all, that help is nigh
To quell war's bloodhounds' hue and cry,
And make them ever cease.

* * * * *

So far the river bore me on
My course, but now no more ;
The hills are fled, the forests gone,
Gone too the waters' roar—
But still in thought those scenes shall live,
And recollection fondly give
A picture back to view ;
When other sights have passed away
And faded into distant grey,
These only bright and true.

TO J. M.

A STAR shot thro' the glimm'ring night

That closed upon the sunken day,

Tracked out a golden furrow-light

And seared the skies with dying ray ;

Only a star—yet bound to me

In closest tie—thou wast by me.

A drop fell from yon bending blade

Where it hung glist'ring in the sun,

And glinted diamond, crimson shade,

Now golden and now thickening dun :

It fell unloved by all but me—

And why ? its sheen had flashed on thee.

The morning gale swept on with wing
 Burdened with perfumes of the dawn,
And in its flight it seemed to sing
 That sad and joyous are but one—
Who heard but I? 'twas bliss to me
To breathe the air that smiled on thee.

FRAGMENT—THE SURGES.

I WATCHED the billows breaking on the shore
And rising higher ; and at first they seemed
As though for ever they would swell, nor stay
Their battled climbing : so they fought and rose.
But, as I watched, the foremost foam would glide
Ever adown the shingle, and appeared
What erst was covered, and the surge withdrew.
Thus thought I human pride and man's fierce thoughts
Swell, threatening deluge to what may oppose
And front their rising : then a mightier force
Our old-world thinkers called necessity
Stays the wild fury—leaves the man alone—
As the withdrawing tide leaves the low shore
Bare, ground beneath its force, smooth, silent, strewn.

ZEUS IN HIS WISDOM MAKES PROVISION
FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

FAIR Venus' self made the stern gods to tremble :
Who said he loved not did his thoughts dissemble :
When Eros, lovely child, burst on their view,
Olympus shook, and soon poor mortals too :
Zeús moved with pity saw all ill-at-ease,
And so, to save us, gave men Philotès.

WEEP for them that die ? Joy for those that are born ?
Weep or joy for them that die or ever they see the light ?
Joy for them that marry and keep the marriage-feast
bright ?

Or weep we for them that marry not, and live on their
life alone ?

Weep or be glad do we ask ? alas ! we know not what :
For glad is turned to sad, and woe it mayhap to weal ;
Nor know we if Fate in red or in black will set her a seal ;
And ever unknowing and yearning to know hurry we
on to our lot.

THE CHILDREN OF THIS GENERATION.

‘LET us alone ; we will not hear,’ they cry,

‘ These children of the day ;

‘ Wiser we than the sons of light on high ’

‘ This generation say.

‘ Let us alone : ye weary with your voice

‘ That piped to men of old :

‘ Leave us to work the work of our own choice

‘ And rear the calf of gold.

‘ Leave us : *our* Faith draws vaster multitudes

‘ Than your religions drew :

‘ United we ; ye breed but sects and feuds ;

‘ We will have none of you.

‘ Go to your old forgot, insensate times,
 ‘ Go back, and taste and see—
‘ *Romance* and *nobleness*, and acted mimes
 ‘ *Of faith* and *chivalry*.’

So shriek they in their bitter hate, and pass
 Round ‘ Peace ’ for their watch-word,
And echo rising loathes the hollow farce,
 And answering moans ‘ a sword.’

These sin against their country for their gold
 Cloked with mock charity ;
As Canaanitish-Rahab sinned of old,
 Nor sin as well as she.

These barter as did Esau hunger-faint
 Their birthright from on high ;
But ne’er repentant comes the after-plaint,
 The exceeding bitter cry.

These sin as rose-crowned Helen had the seeds

Of strife for nations sown ;

She walked the way love for another leads ;

These sin but for their own.

Or like the woman who they say sold Rome

For love of Sabine gold,

And found her instant guerdon in a tomb

Of dead shields o'er her rolled.

Disdaining our world-temples these uprear

Their grand hypæthral fane,

High in the lands and brooking no compeer,

To self and God of gain.

No room for charity in that fell creed,

No place for sympathy ;

Sailing on one vast subtersensuous greed

Their smuggling life-craft ply.

Nor then the burning fever-thirst can slake ;

But of their madness dire,

Seeking a fearful stimulant, they make

Their sons too pass the fire ;

The Molochizing fire that sears the germ

Of kindness in man's soul ;

As scorches the fierce noon-sun yon poor worm

Writhing to reach her hole.

A holocaust of nature. All desires

And passions pile they up ;

And pouring their libations to the fires,

Drain the dregs out the cup.

Let them alone ; we talk and waste our breath

To check their mocking cry ;

Wallow they in their festering slime of death,

And there forgotten lie.

TO F. E. C.

WE met and parted ; for the sea

And duty bore you then away ;

And old-heard calls awaited me—

When should we meet—ah, who should say ?

Or where ? if friendships parted be

By our world chances and the way

Of these life-paths, we know the truth all plain,

The meeting may be long ; it may be ne'er again.

Yet have we met hard by the old-known spot

As first, and the quick year has sped its flight—

Leaden, too oft, to such as wail their lot ;

Fleet as the wind to them whose lives are bright—

Your path o'er seas and continents of hot
And arid clime ; mine in the scorching light
Of cities' open gaze and piercing ken ;
Yours in the heavens' clear sight, mine 'neath the
eyes of men.

TO M——

THERE is a sorrow comes to some of us
Beyond our ken ; it comes ; we suffer all
Not understanding ; stunned to senselessness
We move along our life-path, and so leave
The sorrow. And the distance ever grows ;
Month presses month, year year ; we always see
The cloud slow-waning ; but as fringe and edge
Merge centre-nearing, darker grows the whole,
And still mars our horizon.

THE HARVEST END.

Not ripe the bending gold-red corn-ears yet ;
Not ripe that the sharp sickle be thrust in ;
Not yet the great world harvest-home ; the sin
Of man not finished, not the cup brimful
For out-pouring. Not yet—a little lull
Ere that fierce storm that o'er creation breaks,
As now the summer clouds may blacken o'er
The swaying crops : this war-worn old world shakes ;
And, in the eternal, time shall be no more,
And sun and stars and time together set.

HUMANI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM.

Who am I, brother, that I dare to give

My judgment against thee?

Who for a fiercer judgment waiting live

That sure shall meted be.

Am I so pure, my sister, that I dare

Mine own self to condemn thee?

And meet thy look with one self-righteous stare

Shorn of all sympathy?

Who am I to condemn thee? to take up

First stone that thou be slain?

Forgetting as now I fill up the cup

It shall be filled again.

The merest child-lesson that all shall learn

If they nor shut the eye

Nor stop the ear. Oh, God! make each man yearn

With human charity.

Who am I that I dare to separate

My soul garden, and thrust

All from its hedge-walls, and there self-wrapped sate

A Pharisaic lust?

Is not mine own sin deeper? think, ah think,

What meaneth sympathy;

Faint, faintest and yet godlike—the last link

Between us ere we die.

Think ‘Magdalene,’ ‘seven devils.’ Dare to doubt

That pardon. All *may* see

Forgiveness. *Thrust them out?*

Thou? and forgiven be.

Throw, throw thyself before a throne of grace

Low at a mercy-seat :

Cry loud for pardon : gazing on the face

Of one sure paraclete.

Who dares condemn ? methinks to waste the days

In pride of idleness

And nothing-working pleasure but betrays

A sin scarce less than this.

Man's part on earth to work—work, pity, aid

Others to work, and live

For others, not for self in our life-trade ;

Work, pity, and forgive.

FRANZKAI.

WE left him there, and saw his home
 Fade fast behind us in the light ;
The good ship plunged and splashed her foam,
 And Buda waned to one dull light :
Fell back the hills and left the flood,
 The haunts and sounds of men had ceased ;
The helmsman wrenched his wheel, and stood
 To meet the morning in the East.

And all night through we drove our way
 On thro' the low Hungarian plain ;
The night dark softens into grey,
 The Pole-star and the Bears slow wane :

A solitude, a stillness sweeps

The desert marsh with osier lined ;

And thought flies back and flying weeps

To lose all we have left behind.

Why met we if we met to part,

To lose the friendship hardly won ?

Why ran a glad thrill through the heart

At morn, to chill ere set of sun ?

I hate the cliffs that Neusatz crowns,

I hate the clust'ring Semlin towers—

I hate those dull, dead, Danube towns

That robbed us of the joyous hours.

Why did we part ? Could I but stay

With him, I would have risked a cast

With fortune's dice-box, and the day

That parted us had never past.

I may not see him : I could choose

Him only always as my own :

Say, is it good that I should lose

As true a friend as can be won.

OSMAN, 1877.

HE looked upon the town that he had held ;
Looked on the host that thirsted for its fall ;
Looked on the town and on its deadly hills ;
Looked on his ghastly dead that fought by him ;
Looked on the warrior few that stood with him ;
Looked in their sunken eyes that starved with him ;
Looked on his wound that slowly sickened him ;
Looked on his war-worn sword—and yielded it,
And yielded with it—freedom and—himself.

ADYTUM ANIMÆ.

To part the veil and know a brother's secret,
Heart-stored, flesh-robed, soul-hidden, trebly locked ;
To deem we see another's inner man !
We gaze but for an instant—and forget.
A lifting of the snow-mists off the snows,
So may we view beneath us lying deep
Quick nature, clust'ring homes, and lanes, and trees ;
And the cloud-veil regathers, and we lose
The sight, even as we look ; and so pass on ;
And straight forget what manner of sight we saw.
For all men bear within their secret stored :
The only gift we may bear on through life ;
The only gift men carry to the grave,
And carrying, pass beyond.

TO THE NIGHT WIND.

AFTER THE STYLE OF THE RENAISSANCE POEMS
OF THE PLEIAD.

Sighs across the plain,
Woos the golden grain
The soft sea-wind ;
Sunk the burning sun,
His fiery course o'errun,
Draws the night behind.

Breeze across the lea,
Leave the tremulous sea
Lulled to its sleep :
Fan, fan the golden grain,
Sweeping above the plain
With joyous leap.

Woo, woo each poppy red,
And in thy fragrance sped
All flowerets steep ;
Mixing their subtle scent
Each to the other lent
Invite to sleep.

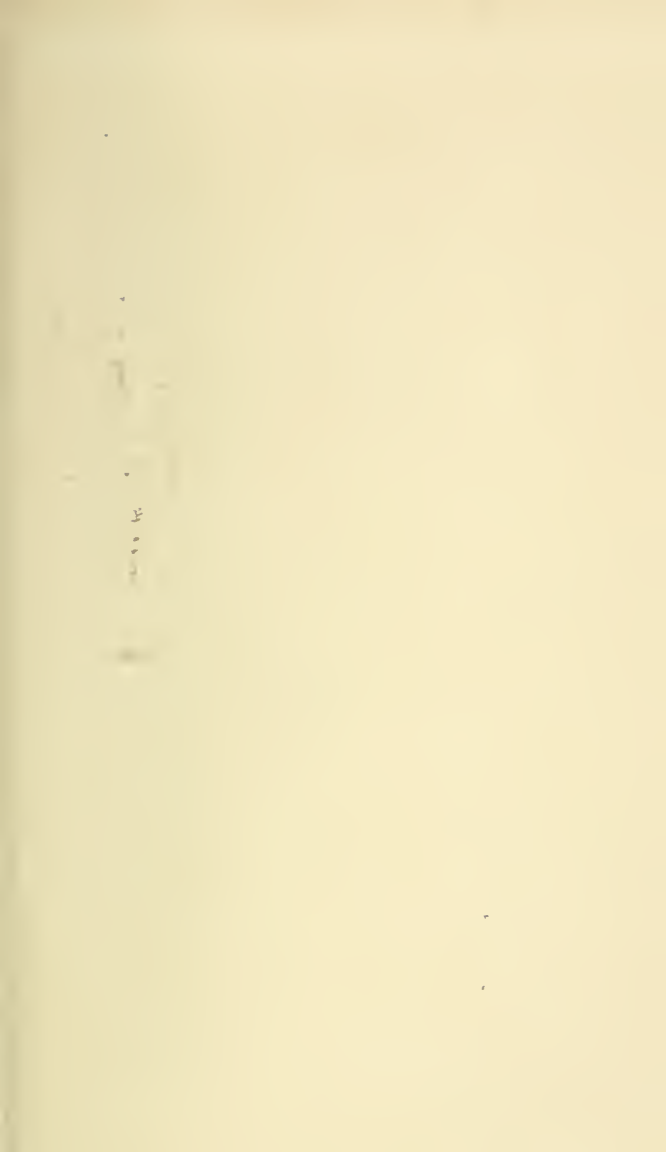
THE MYSTERY OF LIVING.

WHAT is this mystery that men call Life ?
How little do we know it, yet how well.
One prides him he knows all, nor deems it hard :
Both right and wrong : another yearns to know,
Professing an all-ignorance ; wrong yet right.
Round us the lower lives that men call dumb
Ask in their wonder-gaze, ‘ why are we here ? ’
Answer with muteness that may speak to us :
So runs the world : rede his own riddle each.

Is life a good? Yea truly I would count it.
Is it poor ignorance in me then doth frame
The thought? Or is it rather a true greatness
Still living, born in each man that is born?
Weakness or strength? Both strength and weakness we;
A poised balance—rede his riddle each.

...

W. J. ROBINSON,
PRINTER,
SILVER STREET, BEDFORD.



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